

which made them perform so many prodigies, and which was soon circulated in every language by the public journals. This complication of events could not but be fatal to Europe and France, whatever might be its result, but it presented an opportunity favorable to the development of the Emperor's genius. Like his favorite poet Ossian, who loved best to touch his lyre midst the howlings of the tempest, Napoleon required political tempests for the display of his abilities.¹

During the campaign of 1809, and particularly at its commencement, Napoleon's course was even more rapid than it had been in the campaign of 1805.² Every courier who arrived at Hamburg brought us news, or rather prodigies. As soon as the Emperor was informed of the attack made by the Austrians upon Bavaria orders were despatched to all the generals having troops under their command to proceed with all speed to the theatre of the war. The Prince of Ponte-Corvo was summoned to join the Grand Army with the Saxon troops under his command and for the time he resigned the government of the Hanse Towns. Colonel Damas succeeded him at Hamburg during that period, but merely as commandant of the fortress, and he never gave rise to any murmur or complaint. Bernadotte was not satisfied with his situation, and indeed the Emperor, who was never much disposed to bring him forward, because he could not forgive him for his opposition on the 18th Brumaire, always appointed him to posts in which but little glory was to be acquired, and placed as few troops as possible under his command.

It required all the promptitude of the Emperor's march upon Vienna to defeat the plots which were brewing against

¹ Joseph Bonaparte denies that Ossian was the favorite poet of Napoleon, saying that he admired much more the great French and Italian poets, Homer, Virgil, Lucan, etc. (*Erreurs*, tome ii. p. 173). But perhaps the difference between the two statements may be attributable to the fact that Bourrienne left Napoleon comparatively early in his career, and we know that Napoleon progressed in his literary education. See *Sainte-Beuve*, tome i. p. 287, already quoted.

² The Archduke John defeated Eugene Beauharnais, then Viceroy of Italy, and took possession of Padua, Vicenza, and other cities, but, in consequence of Bonaparte's victories in Germany, he was obliged to retrace his steps, and being followed up by the re-enforced Beauharnais

into Hungary,
he was defeated in a great battle near the town of Baab.—
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